

REMARKS

Claims 1 to 4 and 6 to 17 are in the application.

As a result of the foregoing amendment, the term "unitary" has been deleted from claim 1.

Accordingly, the objection to the specification set forth in paragraph 2 on page 2 of the Office Action has been rendered moot and should be withdrawn.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Nelson et al. in view of Koren, are respectfully requested.

Applicant respectfully submits that claim 1 as amended is not rendered obvious by the references relied on by the Examiner in rejecting the claims.

The reference to Nelson et al. is directed to an opening device for a printed sheet feeder for feeding sheets to a saddle-like conveying device 32, as shown in Fig. 4. The opening device consists essentially of two conveying disks 29, 30, wherein the conveying disk 30 has on a circumferential portion thereof sponge

rubber strips 30c which clamp the printed sheets between the conveying disks 29, 30. An opening device of this type is discussed in the description of the prior art of the present application. The disadvantages of this known device are also discussed in the application.

In the last line on page 3 and the first two lines on page 4 of the office action dated September 7, 2001, the Examiner lists the features which are not disclosed by the reference to Nelson et al..

It is the position of the Examiner that the features not shown by the reference to Nelson et al. are disclosed by the reference to Koren.

However, the reference to Koren is directed to a lamella ring, particularly for width adjusting rollers for adjusting the width of web-like materials, such as paper, textile or foil webs. For this purpose, a plurality of lamella rings 2 are mounted in a row in the direction of the roller axis on the core 1 of the roller, wherein these lamella rings 2 are arranged symmetrically on both sides of a plane extending perpendicularly of the axis of rotation of the roller core. By applying a radial pressure, which is produced by a tension of the material web traveling over the

width adjusting roller, the outer circumference of the roller is displaced axially and symmetrically relative to the perpendicular plane and, thus, produces a lateral stretching of the material web. Provided as an outer supporting layer is a flexible hose 3 having an inwardly directed profiling which secures the hose 3 in its position.

Consequently, the only thing the roller of the reference to Koren and the transport disk according to the present invention have in common is that a radial pressure is applied. Because the roller of the reference and the transport disk according to the present invention are structurally different, the effects of the radial pressure application are different and serve different purposes. As a result of forces generated transversely of the axis of rotation of the roller of the reference to Koren, a stretching effect is achieved which is directed over the width of a material web; on the other hand, in accordance with the present invention, a radial reaction force is achieved for clamping individual printed sheets between two opening drums B and C.

Accordingly, it is submitted that a combination of the references to Nelson et al. and Koren clearly will not result in the disk according to the present invention as it is claimed in the present application.

Accordingly, it is submitted that claim 1 and the claims depending therefrom are patentable over the art of record.

Therefore, in view of the foregoing, it is submitted that this application is now in condition for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited.

Any additional fees or charges required at this time in connection with the application may be charged to Patent and Trademark Office Deposit Account No. 11-1835.

Respectfully submitted,

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Encl.: Amended Claim 1 (clean copy; marked-up version);

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By:

F Kueffner

Friedrich Kueffner

Date: February 26, 2003



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Clean Copy of Amended Claim 1

1. (Three Times Amended) A transport disc for an opening device of a printed sheet feeder, the transport disc configured to be arranged on a first opening drum of the opening device, the transport disc comprising:

C) at least one outer elastic support, wherein the outer elastic support is configured to cooperate with a securing disc of a second opening drum of the opening device to clamp an individual printed sheet between the outer elastic support and the securing disc for transporting the individual printed sheet to a transport device,

wherein the outer elastic support is a rubber-elastic segment body extending in a circumferential direction of the transport disc, and

wherein the rubber-elastic segment body is comprised of an outer bearing layer and a compensation area positioned radially inwardly underneath the outer bearing layer, wherein the compensation area is radially yielding and supports the outer bearing layer.



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Marked-up Version of Claim 1

1. (Three Times Amended) A transport disc for an opening device of a printed sheet feeder, the transport disc configured to be arranged on a first opening drum of the opening device, the transport disc comprising:

at least one outer elastic support, wherein the outer elastic support is configured to cooperate with a securing disc of a second opening drum of the opening device to clamp an individual printed sheet between the outer elastic support and the securing disc for transporting the individual printed sheet to a transport device,

wherein the outer elastic support is a [unitary] rubber-elastic segment body extending in a circumferential direction of the transport disc, and

wherein the [unitary] rubber-elastic segment body is comprised of an outer bearing layer and a compensation area positioned radially inwardly underneath the outer bearing layer, wherein the compensation area is radially yielding and supports the outer bearing layer.